



Jo Laxton

Year of Call: 2022

Solicitor: 2000

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Overview

Joanna (Jo) Laxton is a specialist employment and discrimination barrister who completed her pupillage with 3PB and is based from their Winchester office. She transferred across to the Bar having worked as a solicitor for 22 years and specialised in employment law.

During her time as a solicitor, Jo worked extensively in-house, developing experience in all areas of employment law, as well as legal services delivery. She held senior positions with Transport for London, Sodexo, Pennon Group (South West Water) and Vodafone. As such she understands well the legal needs of both public and private sector employers.

Jo advised on all aspects of employment law, managing bulk tribunal litigation, discrimination issues, drafting employment contracts and policies, providing support and assistance on large scale redundancy exercises, and extensively advising on TUPE.

As well as specialising in employment law, Jo held senior posts such as General Counsel, Assistant General Counsel and Company Secretary. These roles allowed Jo to develop knowledge and understanding of wider matters such as internal matter management, and regulatory compliance.

She developed experience in handling very sensitive investigations and whistleblowing complaints, supporting enquiries undertaken by multi - disciplinary investigation teams.

Notably, Jo advised extensively on very high-profile collective employee relations, advising on the Golden Formula and associated injunctive proceedings, time off, and all aspects of labour law. She advised extensively on settlements, both individually and as part of a negotiating team resolving industrial disputes at ACAS. She is a practical and pragmatic negotiator.

In addition to advising and managing active matters, Jo provided extensive training on a range of employment matters to HR and ER. She has trained at Board level on Directors Duties and assisted procurement teams in their understanding of the employment and pensions issues which arise in commercial transactions.

Academic qualifications

- LLB Law, University of Hertfordshire, 2:1 (Hons)
- LPC, Diploma in Legal Practice, Pass, College of Law

Scholarships

- Winner of Cavendish Prize, University of Hertfordshire

Professional bodies

- Employment Lawyers Association
- Lincoln's Inn

Expertise

Employment and discrimination

Jo Laxton was a highly experienced solicitor who has worked in senior legal roles, most recently as Lead Counsel (Employment) at Vodafone and previously South West Water, Head of Employment and Legal Compliance at Rotork Plc. She is no longer a practising solicitor, having elected to transfer across to the Bar and is now a practising barrister with 3PB.

Redundancy

She already has experience as an advocate, for example successfully representing a major motor car manufacturer in unfair dismissal/ collective redundancy proceedings. She also handled interim final hearings extensively in sex discrimination/equal pay proceedings (so called 'part time pensions' cases).

Having strong relationships with colleagues in HR and employee relations, Jo has enjoyed the opportunity of advising on both individual and collective redundancy, s188A obligations and selection criteria.

TUPE

Jo has supported procurement teams and HR in the progression of outsourcing/ insourcing activity, advising on the application of the TUPE regulations, consultation and measures, the provision of employee liability information, and changes to terms and conditions/ harmonisation.

Labour law

Jo has advised public sector and commercial entities on range of trade union issues, including industrial action, picketing, release and facility time, S.145B inducements and detriment generally. She also advised on the status of collective terms, assisted with the negotiation of collective agreements, and advised on compulsory recognition through the CAC.

Discrimination

Devising and supporting policy on equal opportunity and diversity has been a constant theme of Jo's in-house work, and she has taken responsibility for advising and training on common workplace issues. She's advised on the definition of disability and making reasonable adjustments. She has also handled sensitive race and sex discrimination matters, including the careful investigation of complaints, allegations of harassment, resolving workplace issues, dismissal, litigation and dispute resolution. She has provided training on unconscious bias, and harassment.

Service delivery

Jo's previous work as a solicitor in house has allowed her to develop experience in legal services delivery, having held responsibility for bulk claim management and team management. She has undertaken panel firm reviews mainly for the provision of employment law services, and has devised tools designed to provide effective case management.

Articles

Jo Laxton on the case of *Douglas v North Lanarkshire* [2024] EAT 194 in which the EAT considered if, in granting an application to amend, it was an error of law for a tribunal to address the issue of limitation at the final hearing, noting the decisions in *Amey Services v Alridge* and *Galilee v Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis*.

The decision also briefly addresses a more discrete, secondary point, about the application of *Sainsbury's Supermarkets Limited v. Hitt*.

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Jo Laxton considers the EAT's decision in the case of *Kaler v Insights ESC Ltd* [2024] EAT 195, where is upheld the findings of an employment tribunal regarding discrimination arising from disability, and requests made by the Claimant during the final hearing for a postponement.

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Jo Laxton analyses the case of *Bauhaus Educational Services Limited v Elemide* [2023] EAT 161, in which the EAT considers the guidance in *Minnoch* to determine if a claimant had complied with the terms of an Unless Order.

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Jo Laxton reviews *Charalambous v National Bank of Greece* [2023] EAT 75, a case in which the EAT had to decide if the process followed by the Respondent amounted to unfair dismissal.

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[Jo Laxton](#) provides an analysis of the Presidents of the Employment Tribunals' updated guidance on hearing evidence from witnesses who are abroad.

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The Government has opened a consultation exercise to garner input on an administrative approvals process designed to create scrutiny and afford assurance in relation to certain public sector exit decisions.

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Joanna Laxton reviews *Ineos Infrastructure Grangemouth Ltd v Jones and others* and *Ineos Chemicals Grangemouth Ltd v Arnott and others* [2022] EAT 82, in which an employer cannot designate the end of pay negotiations of its own volition, as to do so would undermine the aims of S145B TULRCA.

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An employer cannot avoid the requirements of the ACAS Code of Practice (and the award of an uplift to compensation) by disguising a dismissal as redundancy, says the EAT: Joanna Laxton reviews *Rentplus UK Ltd v Coulson* [2022] EAT 81.

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Employment pupil barrister [Joanna Laxton](#) analyses the case of *Law by Design v Saira Ali* [2022] EWHC 426 (QB), in which the claimant was successful seeking to restrain the defendant from breaching the terms of her restrictive covenants. The article provides a useful reminder of the principles that apply when determining the enforceability of restrictive covenants.

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